

Masaji Marumoto #70
April 8, 1985

Q: Go ahead, Mr. Marumoto.

A: I think you better start by asking the questions.

Q: Well, I'd like to just start by asking you to give me a little bit of your background; where you were born and how you were educated.

A: Well, because the Japanese celebrated the centennial, so called centennial of the Japanese emigrants, I may say this. I am the son of the so called contract laborers and there are very few... I don't think there are half a dozen sons of contract laborers right now... or descendants.

Q: Is that from the original group that came in 1885?

A: No. The contract laborer group came in 1885, February 8th I think it was, and then in 26 ships. The last ship came here in 1894 and the total number of contract laborers in round figures would be 29,000. And my father came in the 6th group which arrived here in November 1888, three years after the original group. And his... uh... the ship manifest shows that he was contract laborer number 5,140 out of the 29,000. And he was sent to Pahoia Plantation on the Hamakua Coast of the Island of Hawaii, on the three contract. They all came on three contracts. And then he worked for four years more. Then he came out to Honolulu. Then after working in Honolulu for three year she went back to Japan and married my mother.

As a matter of fact, my father, according to the record, did not have anything to do with the selection of my mother as his wife because the family record in Japan, village record shows, my mother was already in the register of my fathers family as his wife one month before he reached Japan.

Q: So everything was all arranged beforehand huh?

A: Apparently. And then I was born in Honolulu in 1906. And then when I was a year and a half old, I had a chance to buy a store in Kona, so that I grew up in Kona. My father became a Kona merchant.

Q: Whereabouts in Kona was that?

A: It's just on the Keaau of Manago Hotel. If you drive there, the old building in which my father conducted the store is still there. I think even my father's stores name is still there, but nobody is operating.

Q: What was the name of the store?

A: Marumoto... T.Marumoto.

Q: You grew up in the Kona area?

A: I grew up until I was in the 6th grade of the grammar school in Kona, and the reason why I left Kona, it was during WWI, 1917, 1918, and in Kona, kids used to quit school at about 6th grade to help the parents pick coffee and then do some weeding and so forth. And there were very few already in the 7th grade and the 8th grade, so that when I went to school, I think my class, 6th grade had 18 students. Then there were only 6 students in the 7th grade; only two in the 8th grade. And it was WWI, so we were in the same class... no, same classroom, taught by the same teacher (c) the principal, And while the teacher, (I was in the 6th grade), while the teacher was teaching the 7th grade, and the 8th grade, we would be knitting socks and sweaters for American soldiers overseas, see. And so I asked my father, send me to Honolulu. And that's how I came out to Honolulu to finish my 7th and 8th grade in grammar school in Honolulu, before going to high school.

Q: Where did you finish your education in Honolulu?

A: In Honolulu?

Q: Yes.

A: I finished my education in Honolulu at McKinley High School, class of 1924. And what happened to me was that because I was so ill trained in English, I tried to get into the nearest public school to my Japanese school, which was across from the Buddhist Temple on 4th Street, Pali Hwy. now. I went there and the principal asked me (and that's Central Intermediate now, but at that time it was a grammar school up to the 8th grade, because at that time the elementary schools, the school system was on 8/4 basis instead of 6/3 basis), and the principal asked me, "What class are you planning to register." I said, "7th grade." She chased me out. She said, "Our 5th graders speak better English than you." (laughter)

Q: Do you remember her name?

A: Overend, O-V-E-R-E-N-D, and Central Grammar, of course, was the school where most of the Caucasian students went. So, then the only school I could go was Territorial Normal School which is those days, after a student finished the grammar school at 8th grade, they would either go to high school or normal school. And you went to Normal School for four years and you became a teacher. You didn't need any college degree. Then if a person went to McKinley High School (and McKinley High School was the only public high school on Oahu, on this Island,) and then a student wanted to be a teacher, then after graduating from McKinley, he or she went to Normal School for one year and then

became a teacher. That was the system.

Q: So what did you do after you finished high school?

A: What happened was, I was in the same class as Hiram Fong and Chin Ho and oh, maybe about more than half a dozen physicians and dentists, and others who became pretty prominent. Probably that's the most well known class at McKinley High School.

And then, in those days there was not much fuss about religious freedom, so every high school class went to a Christian church Sunday, Sunday before graduation, to be baccalaureate Christian baccalaureate. Now in my case, in the case of my school, we had baccalaureate at Central Union and Rev. Palmer was the minister and I still remember the theme of his sermon was to aim high, as high as you think you can go.

And as I said, 210 I think in the class, Hiram Fong was there, Chin Ho was there. None of us had planned to go to college; had not applied to college. Chin Ho had never gone to college, Hiram Fong I think worked for about three years before he went to University of Hawaii.

But in my case, what had happened was the day after graduation (and the graduation was also in a church - 1st Methodist Church) and the one who delivered the address to the students was the minister of that Methodist Church, and in uh...last years 60th reunion of the class, I was interested in what I had said in my address because I represented the class and graduated number one and made the speech. And then at that time, the minister of the Methodist Church was the speaker at the graduation, and to show you what the psychology was, he emphasized the fact to be very faithful to employees and so forth (laughter). So it's an interesting situation.

Q: Yes, it is.

A: Then on the day after my graduation, the Bishop of the Buddhist Church and my father was a devote Buddhist and knew the Bishop here, the Bishop of the Buddhist Church and his wife come to dinner with me the day after graduation. And at that time, Seaside Hotel, which was on the location of the present Royal Hawaiian Hotel, was the best Hotel in Honolulu.

So I was invited there by the Bishop and his wife and myself. So three were at the dinner and that was the first time I had ever eaten at a place with a linen tablecloth on and heavy silver utensils. And he asked me whether I planned to go to college. I said, "No, I can't afford to go to college. I think I'm going back to Kona to help my father." He says, "Well, I've got a scholarship for you so plan going to college, and if you haven't already applied to college, apply."

Then my... I went back to Kona and my father told me to apply to a college where there is somebody you know. And it so happened that a person from the same village who came here in the 4th group of contract laborers had a son who had graduated from Chicago Dental College and instead of coming back to Hawaii had opened his office and was practicing in Chicago. As a matter of fact, he passed away last year; stayed in Chicago all this time; worked there; was very important. And so I applied to Chicago and was admitted there.

Then what happened was, after two years I had already completed the three-year course by going to summer school and taking extra courses and at Chicago,

if a person graduated with B+ average for four years, he would be Phi [*Beta Kapa*] If you were A^a(average A(c)), after three years, you'd be Phi [*Beta Kapa*]. After 3 years and by the end of the second summer, I had completed the three year curriculum and so I was admitted as a member of Phi Be.

Then my father asked me, "So what are you taking?" I said, "Philosophy." And a person who came here as a contract laborer wouldn't know what philosophy is. So he was displeased and he said, "Take something more practical." Well, I could have majored in, and I did major in, and graduated as a Economics major. And at the graduation I was offered a fellowship in Economics at Chicago, but I decided not to accept that because in those days, a Oriental who took Economics or any such subject, couldn't get any job and I had never stepped into any law office, (had never stepped into any lawyers office). But I decided to go to Harvard, and take up law. And as an off side I may say this, that Hiram Fong worked for three years before he went to University of Hawaii, then he graduated from the University of Hawaii. Well, he wanted to go to Harvard. Now in my case I had no trouble because from a big

prestigious college Harvard would accept anybody who graduated. The only thing they did was after the first year they wash out about one third.

But then Hiram wanted to go to Harvard. Harvard said, "We don't recognize University of Hawaii." So then Arthur Smith(??) who was a graduate of Harvard and Attorney General here... and I think he was a regent of the University of Hawaii, wrote to Harvard... wrote to Harvard and said, "Is there any way he can get to Harvard... admitted to Harvard?" And Harvard wrote back to Arthur Smith and said, "We take anyone who's in the top 25% of a small college, but in the case of University of Hawaii, we'll make an exception if the person you are speaking of is in the top 15%, and Hiram happened to be in the top 15%". (laughter)

Q: So, he made it.

A: He made it. But Chin Ho never went to college.

Q: How did you find Harvard?

A: Well, I'll tell you, I was the first Oriental student at Harvard Law School and there were a couple of colored students but I was the first Oriental student. And Harvard admits about 750 to 800 a year dividing into two sections.

And then the professor had a seating chart, and without exceptions, the professors would call the students uh... in the order... according to the seating chart. He doesn't jump all over. And, in the first year we have no electives but five compulsory courses, so there are five professors.

Every professor, and then I may say this, within the course of a year, about each student would be called about six times or seven times for recitation and then because the professor calls in the order of seating, you know when you would be called. In my case for the whole year, not one single professor called me for recitation. I suppose he figured that I could not recite (laughter).

And then Harvard washed out about one third and then probably 50% graduate. And you only know whether you passed or you didn't pass. Individually you know what you made, so that it wasn't too bad. Although I didn't make... in my third year, my grade was good enough to be an honor student. But the first two years we had no law background anywhere, so that it was all Greek to me and didn't make too well. Third year was all right, and that's how it was and I graduated in 1930.

Q: Did you come back to Hawaii then?

A: I came back to Hawaii then.

Q: What did you do?

A: Well, I uh... it was 1930, Depression Era; I made the route of different law offices. One office that I called on was Kemp & Steinbeck(?). Kemp later became Chief Justice; Steinbeck became Governor, and also Federal Judge in the Hawaii Supreme Court. And they had employed Sukiamia(?) who later became Chief Justice, and he had just been appointed City and County Attorney by Gillilan(?) who elected a City and County Attorney.

Gillilan's campaign was based on the fact that, "If I am elected, I would appoint one Japanese Deputy, one Chinese Deputy." Until then, there was not a single Oriental Deputy, and he won by 97 votes (laughter). Gillilan's first choice was Robert Morakani(?); Sukiamia was supposed to be a Democrat, because campaign stand had a democratic front. But, Oragami(?) was involved in the appeal of the Fukunaga case and so he could not accept Fatsikimo(?) was appointed Deputy and there was an empty office room at Kemp and Steinback. So Mr. Kemp said, "Well, Sukiamia, use this office, and you can come and use this office and use our secretary on a two-thirds, one-third basis.

Q: What did two-thirds, one-third mean?

A: What it meant.. so I asked him, "What does it mean?" exactly what you asked me. He said, "Well, whatever business you bring in; whatever fee you get, you regain one-third and we take two-thirds, and that's a fact. So I walked out and then, fortunately, an attorney named Thompson who was fairly prominent, had an office manager who was a Japanese and who he liked very much. And that office manager came out from corner so he knew me and my family. I saw him and he mentioned to Mr. Thompson, and Thompson said, "Bring him in."

Q: Do you remember Mr. Thompson's first name?

A: Fred.

Q: What was the office managers name, do you recall?

A: Naguchi(?)

Q: First name?

A: Uh... I'll get it for you but....He has a Japanese name, Girokicha(?) I think, and so I got a job there. Mr. Thompson treated me magnificently. Now one of the big cases... oh yeah, what happened was this: I started in the first week of January, 1931, because I passed the Bar in the Fall examination of 1930, the year of my graduation. And uh... he gave me a hundred dollars a month salary, which wasn't bad because most of the people, even non-Japanese "haoli" kids used to get only \$50.00 a month in those days.

For instance, Edward Silva, who graduated one year ahead of me at Harvard, from a very prominent Portuguese family here, he got only \$50.00. Now Fairbanks, who later became Circuit Court Judge here, he told me that he was

married and then he graduated and got a job in Fresno. He got only \$75.00 a month.

Q: That was the Depression.

A: Depression, see. But Thompson gave me \$100. Then I sat down there for about two months and just warming my seat; doing nothing... no assignment. So I told Mr. Thompson one morning, "Mr. Thompson, I'm going to Hilo." He said, "What do you want to go to Hilo for?" I said, "Well, I've been here for two months and actually I don't think I'm earning salary from the way I'm here, because I haven't gotten any assignment to speak of." And so forth. And so he tells me, "Well," he says, "that's none of your goddamn business." I gained the salary. He says, "If you go to Hilo now, the old time loyalists in Hilo would run rings around you and the old-time attorneys in Hilo were Carl Smiths father and couple of "haoli" attorneys. You would be disappointed. I'll start assigning cases to you. Just hang on." And he did start assigning me a lot of cases. So I was fortunate.

Q: What kind of cases did you get?

A: I had one Supreme Court case, and then some probate cases, and not too big a case. But then again, you probably heard about the Massie case. I wrote a Globe Review article last year, in the University of Hawaii Law Review, about the Massie case, and he let me work on it.

Q: What sort of work did you do on the Massie case?

A: Oh, just researching if problems of law came up, and in the second case where... not the first case, but in the second case where these sailors and Mrs. Massie were involved, they hired two mainland attorneys, and one was [Clarence S.] Darrow.

Q: Did you see Darrow perform in court?

A: Yeah, one time. I'm going to tell you. What happened was every noon I'd go to lunch together with Mr. Thompson, Darrow, and Admiral ..., who was it now... Pearl Harbor Commandant, and after lunch they would go to Mr. Thompson's office.

Q: He would have lunch with the Commandant at Pearl Harbor?

A: He would.

Q: He would have lunch with the Commandant?

A: Yeah, or they would go by themselves, Mrs. Fortequé(?), Mrs. Massie's mother, Mrs. Massie, and Lt. Then after lunch they would go into Thompson's office, and then discuss the strategy for the afternoon. One afternoon, Mr. Thompson called me. Some question of law had to be researched, so he called me in. Then Admiral Sterling was just flabbergasted that such a secret conference and an Oriental should be called in. So Mr. Thompson said, "Admiral, you don't have to worry. If I don't trust the fellow he would not be in this office." That was the biggest boost I had (laughter), and in that case he let me sit in on every hearing in the case.

So I didn't need to be in the office. He said, "Go and listen in and see how they operate." and then I ran some errands and looked up some points of law. Points of law had to be looked up; that's how it was.

Q: What is your impression of Clarence Darrow; how he operated?

A: The way he operated, he was already a little too old, and he wasn't sharp enough. But he was a gentleman, that is, as a matter of fact, one of the things that happened was he brought two analysts from Los Angeles to show that Massie was insane. And one day the analyst was put on the stand and questioned; Darrow questioned him, and his direct questioning ended at 4:00.

So the cross-examination would be the following day, and Armbreck(??) who was a special Deputy Attorney assisting the Chief Attorney who was Jack Kelly, did the cross-examining and the first thing that Armbreck did was to produce a book like this, and he asked the witness, "Are you the owner of this book?" "Yes." "Will you turn to page so and so?" and he did "Will you read second paragraph?" or third paragraph or whatever it was. And that statement that he read from his book was completely contrary to his testimony, so he didn't have to cross(c)examine any more.

I don't think Darrell thought there would be a person who would win; this analyst book, or maybe he didn't know that he had written that book. But Armbreck was sharp enough, and spent the night before reading his book. So it was a very short cross-examination; that's the way it was (laughter).

Q: It must have been a lot of uproar in the community here about the Massie case.

A: Would you be interested in my law review article on the case?

Q: Oh... oh yes, certainly.

A: I have an extra so I'll show you.

Q: Oh, thank you.

A: I'll give a copy to you.

Q: Yes. It created a lot of tension I imagine. So during this period, you of course were of the few Japanese-American attorneys in Honolulu and..

A: I was only one of the two who were practicing because Sukiama had already become City and County Attorney, and after being with Mr. Thompson for two years, I said, "I think I'm going to open my office and start practicing independently." and spoke with Mr. Thompson about it. Mr. Thompson said, "I think that you are ready now, so that if you want to do it, you have my blessing." And he called his secretary, the office manager and said, "Well, Marumoto is opening his own office and he may need some files, so let him take out any file he needs for his case, and you have my permission to let him use it." That's the way it was, so I was very lucky."

Q: Very lucky.

A: And then he also said, "I think you'll need some help in the beginning, so I'll shoot over some small cases to you." and he did.

Q: It was just immediately after this period that Col. George Patton became Chief of Army Intelligence here in Hawaii.

A: That is right.

Q: And of course it was during that period that he prepared his plan and his list of people, and you were on that list. Why do you think that you were included on that list?

A: Because I was a licensed attorney. He put every licensed attorney on it.

Q: Every Japanese-American licensed attorney?

A: Yeah.

Q: So it was more just a matter of your position in the community than anything else.

A: He's Court of Appeals Judge in Washington, D.C. now.

Q: Shiro Kashira (??)

A: Yeah. He was not mentioned because this was one year after that report was made. Ralph Yamaguchi(??) also was not mentioned because 1936. In 1935, Tom Akino(??), (he's dead so he's not in this list), but Tom Akino passed the Bar in 1935 and he's in. Every licensed attorney was in. Of course, I was a director of Japanese Chamber of Commerce. But I don't think he bothered about those things. I think it's a fact, that is uh, he uh... just... picked up every licensed attorney.

Q: Did you ever meet him?

A: Huh?

Q: Did you ever meet him when he was here?

A: No. And I think he mentioned in his list, there are two District Court Practitioners, and who legislators. I think Thomas Sakakihara(??) was in it. He was a District Court Practitioner and then he was a Legislator see; and another one was Ongi on Kauai. He was also a District Court Practitioner and a Legislator. So that's how it was.

Q: Is a ... during the 1930's, did you gradually build up your law practice?

A: What was that question?

Q: During the 1930's, did you gradually build up and increase your law practice?

A: Oh yes... oh yes. As a matter of fact, I was pretty prominent in the Japanese community and if this... and I think this happened after Patton made his report. I think it was in 1936, after the Manchurian incident, Ambassador Seito(??), Japan, got called back to go to Manchuria to see the conditions there

and then speak about the conditions there.

The Japanese Government Foreign Office wanted Seito to meet prominent Caucasians on his way back to Washington, so Vice-Consul Yamasaki(??) who was acting Consul General here, got a wire from Japan, stating that.... asking him to make an arrangement for Ambassador Seito to meet some Caucasian... prominent Caucasian on his way back.

Well, Vice-Consul Yamasaki didn't speak English and then even if he did speak English, in those days Japanese Consul Generals didn't associate too closely with Caucasians, and so he didn't know what to do. And I was President of the Japanese-American Citizens League here, which was the most prominent HAA organization. He telephoned me for assistance; so he says, "Can you help me?" Well, I said, "I'll try."

And what happened at that time was a fellow named John.... anyway, the... manager for the.... I think it was John Hamilton, he was the executive of the "haoli" Chamber of Commerce. I think his title would be President now. Somehow, I had developed some contact with him and he was very nice. That is he was much older. I was only 29 years old then and he treated me just like his son. And so I went to see him and I said, "I have this problem and is there any suggestions that you could make." Then he said, "I think it can be worked out. I'll give you an answer in a couple of days."

And Harold Dillingham was President of the Chamber of Congress and in those days the Chamber of Commerce used to have quarterly membership meetings every three months at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel [for] lunch. And a couple of days later (maybe three or four days later), Hamilton called me and said, "I've got it worked out. Instead of you or the Japanese Consul asking for the privilege to speak to prominent persons, his schedule of arrival here in October would be just right for him to be the principal speaker at that quarterly meeting. So instead of you asking us a favor, we'll ask the Consulate here to contact Ambassador and ask him whether he would be the principal speaker." And that's how it was arranged.

So when my name appeared in the Patton's list, I thought maybe because of that connection I might have been in, but it wasn't.

Q: Oh... (END OF TAPE - SIDE 1) Then as War approached, did... were many people in the Japanese community thinking about the predicament that Japanese-Americans would find themselves in, if Japan and the United States went to War.

A: I don't think there was that much concern expressed in the Japanese community. Although, around 1939 (latter part of '39 and '40 and so forth) for the first time, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce began thinking about ways in which to get closer to the "haoli" community. So that, I suppose, on the first time the Japanese Chamber of Commerce (Director of Japanese Commerce) invited the Directors of the "haoli" Chamber of Commerce plus a few other prominent "haolis" was in 1940. And on those occasions, we'd invite... the first party was a sit-down dinner with trays and Japanese style at Japanese teahouse.

Then I think it was in 1941 (about a half year before Pearl Harbor) we again held a cocktail party, inviting the Army Commander, Navy Commandant, and prominent "haoli" officials and so forth; and actually, I happened to be the one doing the dirty work (laughter), inviting and arranging, and those things. But, certainly there was concern that the relationship may be bad and we just have to try to get closer to the "haoli" community.

Q: Was there any organizations that were formed before the Pearl Harbor Attack, like the Morale Committee, to accomplish that kind of work?

A: Morale Committee was not organized until after Pearl Harbor.

Q: Was there any organization that was formed?

A: No. Probably would be Chamber of Commerce. See what had happened was, I think that until 1938, the Japanese society here was split up in small fragments; the most prominent organization being the Chamber of Commerce. But the Chamber of Commerce would be mostly importers and wholesalers; then Japanese Merchants Association would be the retailers. Then in 19... I think around

1939, we decided (and I say we because I was Director of Chamber of Commerce) that instead of Japanese Merchants and split up, we should combine into Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and cut the contractors in and so forth.

And that merging of the organizations took place I think around 1939. And I was one of the committee members from the Chamber of Commerce side to negotiate what the Merchants Association and reform that.

Q: I suppose it's indelibly imbedded in your mind what you were doing when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A: Yes, what happened was, I don't know but you probably know some details from Butch Smiser's(?) article, but what had happened was in... May....I think it was May, of 1940, Nippon Yusen Kaisha... the Japanese Steamship Company had built a new ship (I forgot the name of the ship.) But on the maiden voyage of that ship, the Company sent all the first class passengers to the Royal Hawaiian for dinner, and then used the dining room of that ship for dinner for Caucasians, Japanese, (I don't know whether there were Chinese merchants or not) but to invite them to dinner there.

And then, (I don't sip now, but in those days I used to drink) and then I was drinking Scotch, double Scotch, and so forth, and I know I drank with President of Inter-Island Steam [*Navigation*] Company and so forth. And when the dinner time came, I was pretty well soused and I don't know who I sat with, see?

And then the next morning, I got a telephone call from FBI and I didn't know why FBI should call me. As I say, the agent in charge was to speak to me, see? So I was a little concerned and I went to Dillingham Building, 3rd floor, to where the FBI office was. And when I went there, I was taken to the room, office of agent in charge, Robert Shivers. Robert Shivers had come in August of 1940... uh no... was it 1940?... uh... it might have been 1939.

But then I went in to know what was up, and he kept smiling and said, "I'm Bob Shivers, agent in charge here. I sat with you at the same table last evening and I have been here since August," Oh yeah, he came in August of 1939 and this was in 1940 "and it's now about 9 months since I came. I have found lots of Caucasians making reports to me. I have not heard the Japanese side of it. I want to find out the Japanese side of it. Can you help me?" And so I said, "Well, do you have a family here?" He said, "Yeah, we have no children, but my wife is here with me." "Well, if that's the case, do you think Mrs. Shivers and you would mind coming to my home for dinner. I'll get a few couples." And then I said, "Sure.", so I telephoned my wife from his office and I had about four couples, I think, beside myself and Shivers. Because what we did was in a small dining room, it would sit only eight, but by putting in the planks I could sit twelve. So we had dinner for six couples. That's where Shivers got his first introduction to Japanese here.

Then about two months later, Japanese Chamber of Commerce again had.... oh no, I think that was the first Japanese Chamber of Commerce party for the haolis. They called me and he said "by that time we were on first name basis" so Shivers said, "Masaji, are you going to the party tonight?" I said, "Sure." So then he said, "Can I pick you up?" I said, "Well, what's Corinne(??) doing?" (that's his wife's name) "Nothing." I said, "Why don't you have Corinne come to my home and spend the evening with Sikeko(??)", that's my wife's name, while we are at the teahouse. He says, "Well, if Sikeko promises that she will not make anything special, I'll bring her over." And then they became very close friends.)

Then another thing that happened was that in 1939 (Summer), I had gone to the New York Fair; took my father along. My father got in an accident in Washington, D.C.; traffic accident. He got hit by a street car and he died there. But on the way back, I drove across the continent and went to Hoover Dam and so on... Lake Mead.

Then, so I showed that movie to Mr. and Mrs. Shivers. Then Mrs. Shivers said, "Well, [Lt.] Col. Marston was the G2 here. Mrs. Marston is Mr. Mead's daughter. I don't think she had seen Lake Mead and she might be interested." And uh, then a couple of weeks or so I mentioned it to Mrs. Marston.

Then in no time my wife received a telephone call from Mr. Marston. She says, "I want to invite you and your husband to dinner and will you bring that 16mm film over?"

Q: Is that the film you had taken?

A: Yeah, I had taken. And as far as I know, we were the first Japanese couple to be invited to the quarters of ... staff officers quarters in Fort Shafter, and in that way we became, again, very close friends (laughter). So it just happened that way.

Q: I suppose... where were you when the Attack took place on Sunday, December 7th?

A: I may start it off by going back a little.

Q: O.K.

A: That is, after I introduced these Japanese couples to Shivers, Shivers.... I used to spend practically every afternoon (Saturday afternoon) with Shivers and it's still a wonder to me what I had to speak about. But we would have maybe two rounds of whiskey and we would be talking about the situation here.

Then my

wife and our son was at that time was only 5 years old (or 4 years), so Mrs. Shivers, my wife and my son, would go to a different room and spend the time by themselves, while I was talking with Shivers.

And then, I didn't know until later but Shivers had formed a breakfast group of about half a dozen Japanese. Nucleus were the ones I invited to my home and later I figured that, well, I wasn't included because he might have been cross-checking. But I was never included.

And then on, I think it was Tuesday before Pearl Harbor, I had a dinner engagement at a Japanese Tea House with Daswon Sumida(??) (at that time the most prominent Japanese in Honolulu), Shivers, and me at the Tea House; just the three of us.

Q: Was Mr. Sumida (??) and merchant?

A: That is I said uh... by that time, Sumida... Shivers was on first name basis with Sumida, so he was calling him Daswon(?). I think it was Tuesday before Pearl Harbor, Shivers telephoned me about noon. He said, "Will you tell Daswon, I'm very sorry but I can't make the dinner tonight, and will you come to my office?" And uh, I think that was the day, FBI found some Consulate staff burning documents at the Consulate, if I'm not mistaken. And then also, that was the time when the Army here received a wire from the War Department to be on the alert because something may happen; and then that the War will start. And I'm not saying anything secret because it is all written in Hawaii's OR's(?) and in Navy also, got the same wire. The only difference between the Navy and the Army was the Navy wire stated that the shooting would be expected in Southeast Asia, not Hawaii. But Army heard other information. And then he told me to come over (Shivers told me to come over), so I think I had cut it off.

Q: Was this on Tuesday?

A: Huh?

Q: Was this on Tuesday?

A: This was... I wasn't able to get there until Thursday I think, because I had court cases or something. But, so I finally got home and then says, "I think a World War has started. But I don't want to say what we were talking, but for you Japanese, I think the best thing that could happen to you, because even though you said you'd be loyal to the United... nobody so far believed you. This is the chance that the Japanese here, second generation Japanese, to prove what they've been saying."

Then of course the shooting began on Sunday morning. That morning I had an appointment with a Japanese merchant named Yamani(?). He was one of the three richest Japanese in Honolulu. He had bought the property which is now Kalihi shopping center, and had invested quarter million dollars (of course quarter million dollars is not a big sum but in those days it was a big sum), and I was going to discuss with him some technical problems connected with that purchase. Then I turned on the radio before I went to my office and the radio said, "Pearl Harbor has been attacked. Keep off the streets."; so I didn't go.

And then at Shiver's home at Black Point, (as I said they used to have a breakfast meeting) with breakfast prepared by Mrs. Shivers and they'd be discussing the problems. And there were probably half a dozen AJA's having breakfast when the call came in that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. Shivers just rushed out see? Then the other AJA boys were having breakfast, also prepared to rush out. Mrs. Shivers according to the article written by Smithe(?) said, "You don't have to rush out. You cannot do anything in this situation. You just have to calmly finish up breakfast." She was very calm. That's the way it was.

But coming back before that, when I went to Shiver's office, they said to come in, and he told my that War was going to start.

Q: Was this on Thursday?

A: This was on Thursday, maybe Friday, but I think it was Thursday. "I don't want to see War start but this is the best opportunity for you. This would be... now you can prove what you have been saying up to now about what you

believe." That was his message to me. Then at that time of course, preparing for any emergency, and the M- Day (??) law was passed and so forth, and every block had block wardens appointed if anything should happen during night time.

So on December 7th, in the evening we went, I think the block warden went around in a group of three to see if anything unusual might be happening. And my three consisted of myself, one Portuguese fellow, one Scotchman (laughter). And then uh... I came back.

I went back to my home, around 9:30, and I got a telephone call (telephone was ringing); it was Shivers on the other side. He said, "What are you doing?" I said, "Well..." (of course if this were in California, or if I didn't know Shivers that well, I'd think I would have been grabbed right away.) I said, "Oh, listening to short wave from Japan." He says, "What are they saying?" I said it's so and so and so and so... "Well keep on listening and report to me." (laughter) That's the way it was. And then, next morning I went to the FBI office and I forgot what kind of conversation I had with him, but, so it's altogether different from what happened in California. Here, maybe by saying I was listening to short wave, they never suspected me. Then another interesting thing that you may or may not have heard, but, on Sunday of course, General Fielder (he was still Col. then) was too busy to contact anybody that is civilian. So he didn't contact any of us.

Q: Had he been in regular contact with you before that?

A: He did. He did. And his closest contact were Hung Wai Ching and Shigeo Yoshida. And he telephoned on them on Monday night. He telephoned Shigeo Yoshida and says, "I'm going to broadcast a speech over the radio, and I want you to... I'll send you two Army officers to pick you up, " (He was living in Malakole "and I want you to go to Hung Wai Ching's office and draft a speech for me." (and as far as Fielder was concerned, Hung Wai Ching was the idea man, and Shigeo Yoshida was the writer.)

Hung Wai [*Ching*] could not leave his wife because she was pregnant, but he would have to take her to hospital at any time. So he sent two Army Lieutenants to pick up Yoshida and one of them (he's a dentist now) but in AJA, a Lt. is uh... what was it now... anyway he's a dentist and he was working for [*Lt. Col. George Bicknell*] office G2. Then they picked him up and Shigeo [*Yoshida*] says it was scary as anything because it was night and every corner they'd be stopped by Army guards with rifle.

The main thing that Fielder was concerned was the preservation of the inter-racial situation here. So with that in mind, prepare a speech. So he talked it over with Hung Wai [*Ching*]. He wrote a speech, and Shigeo [*Yoshida*] tells me that the speech which he delivered and which was published in the newspapers here, he broadcast that without a single word being changed. (laughter)

Q: Hmmm. How do you remember Col. Fielder? What kind of man was he?

A: Who?

Q: Col. Fielder.

A: Oh Fielder. Fielder was... we were very fortunate that we had Shivers, the southerner from Tennessee, Fielder from Georgia; he belonged to the 1916 class

of Georgia Tech. He was small so that he did not make all the camps, all on the record, but he made the second team. His nickname was 'Whooch' see. And according to him, how he got that name is when he was quarterback of Georgia Tech., I think the score, that Georgia Tech score against some small college was 120-something, losers nothing. It was still the record. He was the quarterback and how he got his nickname was that he was so slippery that the opponents used to say, instead of saying, "Watch Fielder" says, "Which Fielder". That's how he got his nickname, 'Whooch' That's the southern pronunciation of 'watch', see. And then of course he must have had the respect and the confidence of the Commandants because he served all three Commanding Generals during the War.

Q: Who first got the idea to form the Emergency Service Committee?

A: What had happened was that when the War started, the Military Government established a Morale Committee headed by Charles Loomis(?) who was previously YMCA Secretary, and then Hung Wai Ching who was University of Hawaii YMCA Secretary, and then Shigeo Yoshida; three of them were on the Morale Committee. And I suppose Charles Loomis and Hung Wai [*Ching*] began talking about forming a Committee among Japanese, and instead of calling it the Japanese section of the Morale Committee, we decided to adopt the name, Emergency Service Committee.

And I wasn't that close to the 'big shots' of the Army here but then I was asked to come to a meeting of the different racial committees. And the Emergency Service Committee reappointed the name, Operation - Japanese, and called it the Emergency Service Committee; I think so that it was an idea which the members of the Morale Committee sold to the Military Government.

And as far as the Military Government was concerned, as you know, the first executive was General Green. As far as General Green was concerned, about a year before I think, the Navy had US Attorney in power every fishing boat over 5 tons for violation of the law which stated that any ship (fishing boat) over 4... no, 5 tons should belong to American citizens and no alien should have an interest.

As a matter of fact, what the Japanese were doing was, they were using names of their wives or relatives, and they never... the real owners name was not in there. So the... I think there were about 23 fishing boats here impounded, and I represented about 60% or more than 70% of the owners of those vessels.

And at that time, of course the prosecution was handled by Angus Taylor(?) who was just as anti-Japanese as you can find. And then the Navy was represented, the observer the Marine Major, I forgot his name...

Q: Was that Major Pfeiffer?

A: No. I forgot his name. Then the Army was represented by General Green, because he was the judge advocate at that time. And in that trial, I became very close with Green, so that Green knew me and that's how we were very fortunate because we were pretty close in those things.

Q: What was Green's attitude?

A: Green was just non committal, see. What I did in that case was, I had all these different things, plead Nolo Contendere(?) because I didn't see any way out. Technically, they were wrong; they were using somebody else's name.

One boat I fought because it was registered in the name of two sons (two fisherman) and those two sons worked on the ship; and tried it before Judge Stainback(?) and Judge Stainback decided in my favor (that is in favor of my clients). So we saved the boat. Then after pleading Nolo Contendere (?) I thought of trying to save something by having some money paid to the ship owners and so forth. Well, Angus Taylor absolutely refused and Navy absolutely refused.

What happened was, the Asst. Sec. of the Navy in Washington was my classmate at Harvard...

Q: Who was that?

A: Uh, I forgot his name. He died later. My memory is really not ... but contacted him, (it was an Irish name) and then I got a message saying that have it appraised and what you will do is on each boat assess a fine of \$1000 (I think it was \$1000... I think) and then we would not return the boat, but the difference between the appraised value and the \$1000 fine, the fishermen can get. That's how they settled the thing. I have the file here but that's the way it was.

Q: Why don't you tell me a little bit about the work of the Emergency Service Committee. What sort of projects did you do; what sort of work...

A: Well, what happened was we worked with the police contact group which was organized by Jack Burns who was head of that branch of the police here. And actually what we really did was to go to different communities of Japanese and explain, so they won't violate the law, explain what the military regulations were.

Because they worked during daytime, we had arrange meetings and so forth. And then at the start, those were the principal functions that we engaged in. And then also, because when General Emmons came here, he disbanded all the AJA, what was it now, in the Territorial Guard. But Komatani(?) who was First Lieutenant, he was kept. He was not chased out; all the others were taken out of the military guard.

Then of course, Hung Wai Ching was YMCA Secretary and [Shigeo] Yoshida was also close to those young men. So Shigeo [*Yoshida*] talked the University students who were taken out of the Territorial Guard and after discussing it with Shigeo [*Yoshida*], [*Shigeo*] Yoshida drafted invitation to General Emmons that they would serve in any capacity and so that of University and others were taken in to do necessary (??)... and so forth.

I don't think the Emergency Service Committee could take too much credit for that because that was the work of Hung Wai Ching and [*Shigeo*] Yoshida of the Morale Committee. But it some way we received credit for it.

Then later, when the (... end of side two) (... new tape begins in mid-sentence) out of trouble and ignorance of the military regulations and so forth. We went every night, we went to different communities and explained what the regulations were.

Then one thing we didn't do was, we did not take the position that there should be any organization of racial military units, like the 100th [*Battalion*] and so forth, but because we were all old and our position was we had no business risking the lives of young men if we are not also risking ours and we were over-age anyway most of us.

But when the call for the 442nd [*Regiment*] came in, then we went full

speed and with the different communities and got the volunteers, and in that situation... as far as say other problems were concerned, like when the War Dept. decided to take out all AJA draft board members. Some criticized us for standing our ground, but I was one of those who was a draft board member, and I didn't take that hard position because it's no use taking a hard position situation.

One day when I was in the Emergency Service Committee Office, [Edward deHarne] who was [General Manager] of the Honolulu Rapid Transit and he was Chairman of my (??)... "What are you doing for lunch?" I said, "Nothing." He says, "I'll treat you to lunch. Do you have time this afternoon?" I said, "Ed, did you get wire from Washington." He said, "Yes." I said, "Save your money." He says, "I'll send in a resignation." (laughter) and that's how it was that when the call for the 442nd volunteers came... oh yes, before that of course (background noise and quiet speaking - cannot understand) ... our group was organized, we had nothing to do with that thing ...but, the, the ...182[nd] had parties and so forth

Then when the 442nd problem came, then we went full speed, O.K., to make a good record and where the mainland quarter was (cannot understand) and Hawaii's quarter was 1400 and we got 9,500 volunteers. There we went full speed and of course we had all the cooperation from the young fellows.

Then one thing we did was when the first group of internees were being shipped out from Hawaii, they had not seen their family. First, I think the plan was to have the family members meet them before they sailed but then I think that the military intelligence decided that there would be too much emotional impact on them so what we did was we interviewed - we divided the number of persons and interviewed them and took the message back to the families. That's how it was.

Then when the 442nd.... of course there were some accusations that we engineered the formation, but we didn't do anything, and I think the calling of the volunteers organization of 442nd was pressure to learn the job of Japanese-American citizens; they canon the mainland. Plus, the (something) of the...

Q: Relocation...

A: Yeah, relocation center because according to this Nisei, like Americans they discussed this in their Salt Lake City meeting. That was a start, and there although the Californians relocated, some of the people were allowed to go to a meeting in Salt Lake when it was discussed.

That was the beginning and I think Dillard Myer was for it too and what is interesting is, that in the call for the volunteers, the most quoted passage in the call for volunteers by Roosevelt is, "...The principal on which this country was founded and by which it has always been governed is that Americanism is a matter of mind and heart. Americanism is not and never was a matter of racial ancestry." That was never in there, in the original one. What Dillard Myer did was send it to... was it Davis?

Q: Director of War Information?

A: Yeah, Davis, see? ... sent, and Davis added that paragraph. It was not in the original one. It says here ... and so that's how it came to begin(?). This paragraph was never in the official call and here in Hawaii we took the position that we should never initiate anything like that because we are not in...

of the age group and then when the call came.

I really don't know how many volunteered. In my case, I said to the committee members because I look like a hypocrite, I'm old, plus the fact that I'm lame and that I was excused from ROTC in high school, and it doesn't look right. Well, those fellows in the committee said, "Well, let the Army decide and don't decide yourself." I don't know how many of the others volunteered.

I was at that time 38 years old with a wife and a son, but I did file an application and those fellows in the draft board saw my name and so I said, "Oh heck, call the guy, I was among the first to be called." and sure enough I flunked the physical examination, see.

Then later, when the call for volunteers for the language crew came, Phil Stuart(?) who was the Asst. Commandant of the language school wanted me as a civilian instructor. I told Col. Stuart that as a civilian I think I could plan a much better service here than in just a language instructor in a school. But

even as a buck private if he gets me a uniform, I'll go in and then I volunteered, and I flunked the physical. I flunked the physical but they took me in for limited service and so that I'll be an instructor there.

But then after a year in the language school, the Commandant...

Q: Where was the language school?

A: Minnesota, Camp Savage. Then the Commandant who wanted me to apply for Judge Advocate General Officer Candidate School at the University of Michigan and I said again, if I do apply, I don't see any chance because of my physical condition and uh... but I did apply. The doctor at Minnesota, the Army doctor, never tested me for anything except color blindness and I was not color blind. I was 2400 so my sight wasn't too good. But I applied and then the first difficulty I had as I said, you got to have Army Basic Training, and this was 1944 so I was 38 years old, and he sent me down to Alabama to be with the 18 year old for infantry basic training.

I somehow got through with it, but then...

Q: It's hard enough for the 18 year old (laughter).

A: Oh yes. (laughter) and the next thing was, I waited and waited, and then the first excuse was they take 50 you see, the class is filled. Then I waited for the next class and in December the call should have come; I didn't receive any call. So the Commandant contacted Washington to say, "What's happening?"

And then about a week before the next class started in January I received, the Commandant received a call to send me to get a physical, and my suspicion is that Green who was Judge Advocate General had something to do with it.

Q: That's right he moved from Hawaii to the job up in Washington, yeah.

A: So I got into that class of 50 candidates and as a matter of fact not one of those 50 candidates... 49 of the candidates had ever met a Japanese see. And, but then when the evaluation in OCS by fellow students came they evaluated I think the top 3 or top 5 (whatever it was). What gave me confidence was those guys never had met a Japanese but they evaluate me on the top.

And then on the 14th week, an assignment officer would come. Assignment officer and then the candidate, most of them would be married and have children, so they want continental service. They don't want overseas service. In my case, assignment officer didn't ask me where I preferred to serve. He said, "General

Green has asked me to ask you whether you know what would happen to you if you are sent to General Buckners Army and then be caught as a prisoner?" and I knew I was going to Okinawa; my assignment was in Okinawa, so I didn't answer the question directly but I said, "I'll take my chances." and that's how I went to Okinawa (laughter).

Q: That was where you were assigned?

A: That's where I went, Okinawa, yes. Then from Okinawa I went to Korea and then came back.

Q: O.K., well, it's quite a story you've told (laughter)... and I really appreciate your taking the time to sit down with me.

A: Yeah, I might show you some photograph.

Q: Oh yeah! (tape ends)